

# *Maranacook Community School*

## *Grades 6–12*



### *Advisor Advisee System*

#### **PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The advisor program, the foundation of Maranacook Community School, brings together a diverse group of students with a caring adult.

Advisors support the social, emotional, and academic growth of each advisee by building and sustaining relationships with advisees, staff, parents, and community.

Advisors nurture, advocate for and guide each advisee through his/her unique school experience.

#### *Introduction*

The Advisor/Advisee System was developed by the original staff as one of the founding principles of Maranacook Community School. It is a comprehensive support system for students, parents and staff. Each student is assigned to an advisee group by grade level. Efforts are made to make each group as diverse as possible, considering such factors as towns of residence, gender, interests, needs and strengths. The Deans of Students in the high school and the Advisor Coordinator in the middle school are responsible for the development, implementation, and monitoring of the system.

This guide identifies general goals for the Advisor/Advisee System, as well as specific grade-level goals.

Major responsibilities for Advisors have been carefully outlined to aid them in better understanding the Advisor System and in carrying out their roles as Advisors.

Master Advisors, at each grade level, have been identified to assist individual Advisors with implementation strategies, to assist in monitoring and evaluating our current system, and to provide technical assistance to staff, students and community.

Revised 2012

## **Maranacook Advisor/Advisee System Goals**

In support of the schools' Mission Statements, the Advisor/Advisee System provides communication and support among students, staff and parents through individual and group meetings, home contacts and other interactions. The Advisor/Advisee System requires the commitment of students, parents, and staff and their acceptance of the responsibility for the success of the system.

### **Individual Goals**

Through the Advisor/Advisee System students are encouraged to attain the following objectives:

- to understand themselves and others better;
- to develop positive self-images;
- to identify their interests, values, needs and abilities;
- to participate in academic programs which address their individual needs and goals;
- to reinforce their values of honesty, integrity, responsibility, and respect; and
- to develop social skills focusing on communication, relationship building, and problem-solving.

### **Group Goals**

All grade levels will work towards accomplishing the following objectives:

- to encourage and assist individual students in developing comprehensive listening and communication skills;
- to encourage students to increase their awareness of self and others;
- to encourage students to understand the concept of individuality as well as the value and responsibility of group membership;
- to encourage students to better understand the concept of responsibility as it relates to both personal and academic growth; and
- to encourage students to be a positive influence on both school and community.

### **Grade-Level Themes**

In addition to the above goals, separate grades will focus on the following objectives:

- 6<sup>th</sup> Transition and group building activities emphasizing communication, listening skills, respect, and diversity
- 7<sup>th</sup> Self-advocacy, group membership, and community service
- 8<sup>th</sup> Making healthy choices and transition to high school
- 9<sup>th</sup> Transition and group building activities, decision-making, and problem-solving skills
- 10<sup>th</sup> The relationship between course selection and the requirements for specific careers
- 11<sup>th</sup> Developing leadership skills emphasizing personal, group, and community responsibility, and decision-making concerning career plans following graduation
- 12<sup>th</sup> Pre- and post- graduation planning

It is critical that parents support the advisor/advisee program by encouraging participation in ALL activities.

## **Major Responsibilities of the Advisor**

- To be aware of advisees' needs for academic, social and personal growth and to assist them in developing plans to meet these needs.
- To be aware of advisees' physical and emotional needs.
- To develop and maintain honest, open communication among students, parents and staff.
- To implement specific activities, planned by the advisor and/or advisees, to accomplish overall goals and objectives for their specific grade level.
- To attend grade-level advisor meetings.
- To organize and participate in grade level activities.
- To routinely check and discuss grades with students and parents.
- To provide useful and appropriate input when requested for IEP meeting.
- To maintain a folder for each advisee.

## **Other Responsibilities of the Advisor**

### **I. Advisor Involvement in Discipline**

Upon the receipt of an Incident Report on an advisee, the high school advisor will:

- speak privately with the advisee about the report;
- contact the appropriate grade-level Dean of Students to discuss the course of action, if appropriate;
- determine, together with the Dean of Students, if a meeting is necessary and if parents/guardians will be contacted, and who will notify the parents/guardians;
- attend that meeting; and
- notify special education staff of the Incident Report and pending meetings when applicable.

Upon the receipt of an Incident Report on an advisee, the middle school advisor will follow the behavior rubric.

The Behavior Specialist will mail home all Incident Reports.

In the case of some serious incidents needing immediate attention, the Dean of Students or Behavior Specialist will attempt to reach the advisor and parents as the incident unfolds, but may need to proceed in an expeditious manner.

## **II. Advisor Self-Reflection**

At the beginning of the school year, each advisor will set goals using the results of the Advisor Self Reflection Form. The master advisor will support advisors throughout the year in accomplishing the yearly goals.

Advisors will:

- regularly attend grade level advisor meetings;
- regularly monitor academic progress;
- plan appropriate activities for advisee time;
- develop and submit plans regarding Advisee Day Out to the master advisor or advisor coordinator in a timely manner;
- address disciplinary issues in a timely manner;
- provide useful and appropriate input at discipline meetings, RTI and I.E.P. meetings; and
- hold advisees accountable for being in homeroom on time.

### **Role of the Master Advisor**

The master advisor concept was developed to assist grade-level advisors with the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the Advisor/Advisee System.

**The master advisor's role is to provide the following:**

- Leadership for the Advisor/Advisee System
- Support for grade level advisors
- Communication between grade-level advisors and administration

**Master advisors are responsible for the following:**

- planning and facilitating grade-level advisor meetings;
- assisting advisors in developing an understanding of and appreciation for the advisor/advisee system;
- assisting advisors in carrying out their duties and responsibilities;
- assisting and supporting the Deans of Students and Advisor Coordinator in annual advisor training;
- assisting the grade-level advisors in coordinating activities with grade-level goals and objectives;
- assisting in an on-going review and evaluation of the advisor/advisee system;
- assisting in advisee changes from one group to another as needed ;
- attending master advisor meetings;
- assisting in a periodic review and update of the advisor/advisee system handbook;

- developing an advisor/advisee calendar for each year which outlines specific activities and timelines by grade level;
- ensuring that new advisors have supports to fulfill their roles and responsibilities; and
- providing notes of grade-level meetings to absent advisors.

## **Master Advisor Selection and Evaluation Process**

### **Selection Process**

Master advisors will be selected by grade-level advisors. The grade-level advisors will determine the process at the time of selection.

### **Time Frame**

In order to promote and maintain an effective advisor/advisee system, it has been suggested that the master advisor must have at least four (4) years experience as an advisor before assuming that role. It is recommended that master advisors continue their commitment for a minimum of two (2) years. In the case where a grade level has co-master advisors, it is recommended that the co-master advisors stagger start and end years.

It is important that the following process be followed:

### **PROCEDURE FOR ADVISEE INITIATED CHANGE OF ADVISOR**

Since we believe it is most beneficial for advisees to remain in one group for as long as possible, we recommend advisors downplay the choice that advisees have to change groups. We realize there are exceptions to this. Therefore, we have a process for advisees to move into a different group.

Each year, the High School Guidance Department will send a memo to high school advisors explaining the process of changing groups and reminding advisors of the deadline for any changes. At the end of the school year the advisor will inform his/her group of the process to change groups.

1. Advisee meets with guidance counselor to discuss reasons for requesting the change.
2. Advisee or advocate talks with current advisor and guidance counselor to explain his/her request.
3. An attempt is made to make the original advisee group placement work first.
4. Parental support of request must be communicated with guidance counselor.
5. The advisor coordinator or grade level master advisor and the guidance counselor(s) will meet and determine how to assign new advisor based on individual student needs.

6. The guidance counselor will inform the advisee about the new advisee group placement; the new advisor should make contact with the advisee before school ends in June.

### **PROCEDURE FOR ADVISOR INITIATED CHANGE OF AN ADVISEE**

If, at any time, an advisor wishes to reassign an advisee in his or her advisee group, the advisor must do the following:

1. Meet with advisee to discuss reasons for possible reassignment.
2. Meet with a guidance counselor and discuss the matter.
3. Inform the parents/guardian.
4. Make a final decision, with input from the guidance counselor, parents, and advisee.

If a change is deemed necessary, the advisee will be assigned to an advisee group selected by the guidance counselor and advisor coordinators based on individual student needs.

## WAYS TO SUPPORT ADVISEES' SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL NEEDS

Acknowledge birthdays  
Ask about their outside of school activities  
Attend their co-curricular activities  
Be aware of changes  
Be aware of their needs – peer dynamics;  
Model for them  
Bring FOOD  
Build communication skills with them  
Care without prying  
Check in with advisees each morning  
Connect/consult with their support people  
(i.e. Social worker, counselor,  
specialist)  
Demonstrate a sincere interest in their lives  
Determine values of your advisees and  
support those interests  
Display pictures and/or work  
Don't judge them  
Eat lunch with an advisee  
Encourage their participation in group  
activities  
Get lunch and financial support in place  
Go to their work places, say hi  
Greet each advisee; suggest they have a  
good day

HUGS, SMILES  
Know their habits  
Know who their friends are  
Know your advisees  
Let your advisees know you are human,  
share yourself  
LISTEN, LISTEN, LISTEN to them, not  
“fix” them or give advice  
Look at their faces, notice color  
Make sure everyone has a voice, “air time”  
Meet with advisees outside of school  
Notice their mood and any shift in  
relationships  
Observe interactions outside of the  
classroom  
Positive feedback for things they do  
Role model desired behaviors with special  
needs advisee  
Set some one-on-one time  
Share individual accolades with the group  
Understand the Internet safety issues  
Value their feelings

## TOPICS TO DISCUSS IN ADVISEE TIME

"Conversation starters"  
Academic Success  
Acceptance and Diversity  
Activities outside of school  
Advisee Day  
Advisee spot in room  
Announcements  
Appreciate everyone's view  
Appreciate someone who is different than  
you are  
Appropriate approach to someone when you  
need something  
Assembly  
Being part of different groups  
Being Tardy

Birthdays  
Black and Gold Day Schedule  
Blood born pathogens  
Brainstorming before an event  
Bullying  
Bus Groups  
Career Exploration  
Career Planning  
Celebrations  
Clothes  
Colleges  
Commonalities  
Community Service  
Conflict Resolution

## TOPICS TO DISCUSS IN ADVISEE TIME

Cooperation  
Course Selection  
Current Events  
Daily Check in  
Dances  
Dealing with Parents  
Developing group inclusiveness  
Discipline Reports  
Discussing Real Teen Issues  
Dream Collages  
Driving Privileges  
Drugs/alcohol  
Effective Communication  
Elections  
Empathy  
Extracurricular  
Fears and hopes for transitions  
Fundraising  
Future plans and goals: Academic, social, personal  
Games/Events  
Group Building  
Goals for the year  
Group norms; everyone has a part  
Group Strengths and Weaknesses  
Half days and vacation  
Harassment  
Have fun as a group  
Home Life  
How do you get along with an advisee you don't like  
How to advocate for yourself – school and home  
How to talk with a teacher with whom you are having trouble  
How to welcome a new advisee  
Hygiene  
Internet safety/ General safety  
Introduce, get to know you games  
Issues they are facing  
"Just being"  
Job Shadowing  
Kids Who Care  
KJ  
Listening to others: use favorite things, movies, etc.  
Lunch Assignments  
Make A Difference Day  
Nuts and Bolts of the day  
Open House  
Organized Play Time  
Peer Pressure  
Personal Interests  
Personal Responsibility to a group  
Planning for Advisee Day Out, Kids Who Care  
Pop Culture Stuff  
Post secondary plans  
Problem Solving  
Problems discussing things with parents  
Progress Reports  
Reflective Discussions  
Relationships  
Resources to help them  
Respect for Others  
Respect- how to approach others  
Responsibility to communicate  
Schedules  
Senior Privileges  
Sexuality  
Share common experiences  
Share music  
Sign ups for activities  
Snow Days  
Social Interactions  
Social Skills  
Special travel things at home  
Sports  
Sports schedule  
Stress Management  
Student Led Conferences  
Substances and Abuse  
Support members in time of need  
Talk about Crisis  
Talk about Transitions  
Things we like about each other  
Things you are good at  
This day in History  
Time Management



## TOPICS TO DISCUSS IN ADVISEE TIME

Trust Building	What to do if someone is doing something dangerous
Upcoming School Events	What to do if someone is not keeping the norms
Upcoming Tests	What to do if you see someone who is picked on
Urban legends	Where you are at this point
Values	Why you always concentrate on the negative
What are the characteristics of people with low self esteem	Your Strengths
What are the characteristics of someone with high self esteem	

## WAYS TO MONITOR AND SUPPORT MY ADVISEES' ACADEMICS

Arrange peer helper	Know what each advisee is thinking about after high school; make connections
Casual conversations in the hallways, personal chats	Mail home status reports
Check grades with advisee individually	Make advisees' aware of help sessions, tutoring sessions, homework clubs
Check planners; show how to effectively use them	Mediate with teacher/advisor
Check their grades often, know their strengths and weaknesses	Meet with teacher, guidance to develop plan for a student who is not doing well
Communicate with parents regularly	Participate in RTI and IEP meetings
Discuss ways to study for mid-terms, finals, SAT's with the advisee group	Plan some one-on-one time for discussions and review of grades
Don't badger ...	Reminders for upcoming grade checks
Follow through ... after absences	Review cumulative file
Form advisee "study groups"	Student led parent conferences
Go over their grades with each advisee	Talk about what is going well
Help organize their workload when they've fallen behind	Use check-in sheets

## EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Ask for volunteers  
Ask for participation on advisee days  
Be empathic  
Be prompt in returning messages  
Be sensitive to non-internet parents when doing emails  
Be specific with parents about your needs  
Call at the beginning and throughout the year  
Collect work when students are out  
Communicate about upcoming events  
Conference and portfolio review with advisees and parents  
Conferences by advisee groups  
Do parent teacher conferences by advisee group  
Encourage them to come to parent teacher conferences  
Encourage them to come to parent teacher conferences and see you  
Find out how to contact them  
Get together at the beginning of the year with parents  
Get to know them individually  
Give parents heads up on dates  
Give them contact information for you  
Grade level parent nights  
Informal contact outside of school  
Invite parents to activities  
Invite to advisor get together  
Invite to and explain conferences  
Invite to open house  
Involve in Advisee Day Out and other group activities  
Learn their first names  
Listen, listen, listen  
Maintain grade level spot on website  
Make direct contact  
Meet at student activities  
Monthly Emails  
Parent network  
Parents share responsibilities  
Periodic phone calls  
Personal Calls  
Pot Lucks  
Return calls and email in a timely manner  
Share Goals  
Share positive stuff  
Social Events  
Support advisees at sports/co curricular events  
Use Powerschool  
Use Website  
What is happening, what you are doing  
Write a Letter  
Write about extended advisee times  
Write Letters on Regular Basis

## SUPPORT FROM GRADE LEVEL ADVISORS

Advisee Day Out	Help with reluctant advisees and buying into the system
Advisee in class- dual roles	Helping with discipline issues
Advisees going into the pool	Helping with Homeless Advisees
As a new advisor, what to do on specific events	Humor
Being Organized	Ideas for working with advisees
Bringing new members into the group	Keeping things in perspective
Chaperoning activities	Master Advisors
Clarification of expectations	Moral Support
Climate Stuff	Morning Activities
College Planning	Morning Class meeting
Communication	Parent Relations
Conflict Resolution	Planning career day, Prom, 8th Grade Celebration, graduation, etc
Consistency	Providing camaraderie
Coverage for Appointments	Share info on siblings
Coverage of advisee time when out	Sharing activities
Dealing with a difficult advisee group	Sharing responsibilities
Dealing with challenging advisees	Significant life events
Dealing with difficult situations	Strategies for problem solving
Developing communication	Substance abuse issues
Discipline Ideas	Teen Issues
Family crisis for advisors	Training New Advisors
Fundraisers	What to do during morning time
Help with Non Graduating Seniors	

## WAYS TO IMPROVE DISCIPLINE

Respect Them	Help them save face
Address issues immediately	Humor
Advance communication. Meeting before.	Incentives and Rewards
meeting to stay on the same page	Include co-advisors in meetings/communication
Be Fair	Individual Attention
Be Honest	Individual Conversations
Be Patient	Involve Parents
Be Sure Advisees are Heard	Involvement of advisors in all discipline meetings
Be universal/ treat the same	Keep in Perspective
Behavior Rubric	Keep within advisor role in the issue
Build Goals	Know when to get help
Building Relationships	Listen
Call Home/Communication	Meetings should be timely with resolution
Collaboration with student and teacher	Model
Communicate Expectations to the Whole	Mutual Respect
Class in Class meetings	No discipline during advisee time
Communications with Parents	No Favorites
Connections with Parents and Teachers	Peer Support
Consistency of communication laterally and horizontally	Periodic one on one with advisees
Consistency of consequences	Positive Outlook
Touch base daily with advisees	Post Expectations
Deal with discipline issues quickly	Provide coverage for one another to attend meetings
Discuss issues in advisee group	Relationships: know them
Discussions of appropriateness	Review handbook with group/ rubric
Documentation	Set clear expectations with them
Empathy	Setting personal goals
Encouragement	Show Interest in Them
Expectations are Clear	Special Ed in meetings
Find perspective on the situation	Student self reflection
Follow Through	Student Ownership
Follow through and support	Student Self Reflection
Give Them Options	Support and reward good behavior
Group Accountability	Tap into other resources
Group Ownership	
Help advisees self advocate	